Appl. No. 09/488,469
Amdt. Dated January 8, 2004
Reply to Office Action of October 8, 2003

Attorney Docket No. 81752.0023
Customer No.: 26021

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1.   (Currently Amended): An image forming method of forming a main image and a background ~~mage~~ image serving as a background of said main image by using colors each defined by a set of n-valued basic color gradation values each having any one of n possible values(n is an integer which is equal to or larger than 3) and defining a gradation value of a corresponding one of a predetermined set of basic colors, and synthesizing said main image and said background image, to thereby form a synthesized image,

the image forming method comprising the steps of:

storing a plurality of different image data items respectively representative of candidates for said background image, as background image data candidates;

storing a plurality of different sets of said n-valued basic color gradation values, said different sets corresponding to respective ones of said background image data candidates, as candidates for a main image gradation value set of said n-valued basic color gradation values commonly applied to all valid pixels of said main image;

setting an arbitrary one of said background image data candidates to a background image data item representative of said background image;

setting, out of said candidates for said main image gradation value set, one corresponding to said background image represented by said background image data item to said main image gradation value set;

forming a main shape image data item representative of a main shape image forming a shape of said main image by assigning a validity-indicative one of

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predetermined two values to all pixels of said main shape image as said all valid pixels of said main image, and assigning an invalidity-indicative one of said predetermined two values to the remaining pixels of said main image; and

forming a synthesized image data item representative of said synthesized image by synthesizing said main image and said background image based on a main image data item representative of said main image and said background image data item, said main image color item having said main image gradation value set and said main shape image data item.

2.   (Original): An image forming method according to claim 1, wherein said background image data candidates include image data items each representative of a dot image formed by inputting data of dots as desired.

3.   (Original): An image forming method according to claim 1, wherein the step of forming said main shape image data item comprises the steps of:

inputting text data as a source of said main image; and

converting said text data into image data based on predetermined font data to thereby form said main shape image data item.

4.   (Original): An image forming method according to claim 3, wherein said predetermined font data is outline font data.

5.   (Original): An image forming method according to claim 1, wherein said plurality of basic colors include three primary colors, said three primary colors being cyan, magenta, and yellow.

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6.   (Original): An image forming method according to claim 5, wherein said plurality of basic colors include a basic color corresponding to a mixed color of said three primary colors.

7.   (Original): An image forming method according to claim 1, wherein said synthesized image is formed as a print image to be printed on a printing object.

8.   (Original): An image forming method according to claim 7, wherein said printing object is a tape.

9.   (Original): An image forming method according to claim 7, wherein said print image is printed by an ink jet printing method.

10.   (Original): An image forming method according to claim 1, wherein said plurality of basic colors include three primary colors, said three primary colors being red, green, and blue.

11.   (Original): An image forming method according to claim 1, wherein said synthesized image is formed as a display image to be displayed on a display screen.

12.   (Original): An image forming method according to claim 1, further including the steps of:

determining whether or not an automatic main gradation value adjustment should be executed to automatically set said one corresponding to said background image represented by said background image data item to said main image gradation value set; and

wherein the step of setting said one corresponding to said background image represented by said background image data item to said main image gradation

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value set includes executing said automatic main gradation value adjustment to automatically set said one corresponding to said background image represented by said background image data item to said main image gradation value set when it is determined that said automatic main gradation value adjustment should be executed.

13.   (Original): An image forming method comprising the steps of:

storing a plurality of different color images as background image candidates;

selecting one of said plurality of different color images as a background image;

setting a color of a main image according to said background image selected; and

forming a synthesized image by synthesizing said main image and said background image.

14.   (Currently Amended): An image forming device for forming a main image and a background ~~mage~~ image serving as a background of said main image by using colors each defined by a set of n-valued basic color gradation values each having any one of n possible values(n is an integer which is equal to or larger than 3) and defining a gradation value of a corresponding one of a predetermined set of basic colors, and synthesizing said main image and said background image, to thereby form a synthesized image,

the image forming device comprising:

background image data candidate storage means for storing a plurality of different image data items respectively representative of candidates for said background image, as background image data candidates;

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main image gradation value set candidate storage means for storing a plurality of different sets of said n-valued basic color gradation values, said different sets corresponding to respective ones of said background image data candidates, as candidates for a main image gradation value set of said n-valued basic color gradation values commonly applied to all valid pixels of said main image;

background image-setting means setting an arbitrary one of said background image data candidates to a background image data item representative of said background image;

main image gradation value set-setting means for setting, out of said candidates for said main image gradation value set, one corresponding to said background image represented by said background image data item to said main image gradation value set;

main shape image data-forming means for forming a main shape image data item representative of said main image by assigning a validity-indicative one of predetermined two values to all pixels of a main shape image forming a shape of said main image as said all valid pixels of said main image, and assigning an invalidity-indicative one of said predetermined two values to the remaining pixels of said main image; and

synthesized image data-forming means for forming a synthesized image data item representative of said synthesized image by synthesizing said main image and said background image based on a main image data item representative of said main image and said background image data item, said main image data item having said main image gradation value set and said main shape image data item.

15.   (Original): An image forming device according to claim 14, wherein said background image data candidates include data items each representative of a dot image formed by inputting data of dots as desired.

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16.. (Original): An image forming device according to claim 14, including font storage means for storing predetermined font data, wherein said main shape image data-forming means comprises:

text data-inputting means for inputting text data as a source of said main image; and

conversion means for converting said text data into image data based on predetermined font data to thereby form said main shape image data item.

17. (Original): An image forming device according to claim 16, wherein said predetermined font data is outline font data.

18. (Original): An image forming device according to claim 14, wherein said plurality of basic colors include three primary colors, said three primary colors being cyan, magenta, and yellow.

19. (Original): An image forming device according to claim 18, wherein said plurality of basic colors include a basic color corresponding to a mixed color of said three primary colors.

20. (Original): An image forming device according to claim 14, wherein said synthesized image is formed as a print image to be printed on a printing object.

21. (Original): An image forming device according to claim 20, wherein said printing object is a tape.

22. (Original): An image forming device according to claim 20, wherein said print image is printed by an ink jet printing method.

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23.   (Original): An image forming device according to claim 14, wherein said plurality of basic colors include three primary colors, said three primary colors being red, green, and blue.

24.   (Original): An image forming device according to claim 14, wherein said synthesized image is formed as a display image to be displayed on a display screen.

25.   (Original): An image forming device according to claim 14, further including automatic main gradation value adjustment-determining means for determining whether or not an automatic main gradation value adjustment should be executed to automatically set said one corresponding to said background image represented by said background image data item to said main image gradation value set; and

wherein said main image gradation value set-setting means executes said automatic main gradation value adjustment to automatically set said one corresponding to said background image represented by said background image data item to said main image gradation value set when it is determined that said automatic main gradation value adjustment should be executed.

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